SEIU.ORG
SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, CTW, CLC

Blog | Press | Our Union | Members | SEIU Locals | Jobs at SEIU | Healthcare | Property Services | Public Services | EN ESPAÑOL

SEIU Healthcare

Long Term Care   Hospital Systems   Nurse Alliance

2:36 PM Eastern - Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Congressional Health Care Heroes Stand Up for Medicaid #the-healthcare-law

BY WAMAID MESTEY

One day after a national day of action where thousands of SEIU members took a stand to protect Medicaid and Medicare, Democrats and healthcare advocates united at a **press conference** on Capitol Hill to share a **public call to protect Medicaid** funding during fiscal cliff negotiations.

Ollie Allen, a medical assistant and SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West member, spoke to the media and fellow SEIU members who packed the room at the event, urging all members of Congress to protect Medicaid. "In oncology, chronic pain and pediatrics, I've seen thousands of patients--including lots of seniors--who have worked hard all their lives and helped build our country," said Allen. "These are proud people who through no fault of their own now need help with healthcare because they lack money."

Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) explained that Medicaid is already stretched too thin. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.) noted that **Medicaid matters immensely** to his neighbors and the people he serves. His colleague, Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) advocated protecting Medicaid and the health of Maryland and American families in need.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) reminded his colleagues, "Cutting Medicaid will cost us jobs." Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) pointed out that, Medicaid is the most efficient healthcare program in the country." And Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) said, "If you want to reduce Medicaid, put America

back to work."

Recent public opinion polling shows that **70 percent of voters strongly oppose cutting Medicaid** in the name of deficit reduction. They don't want benefit cuts at the expense of the health care for seniors, people with disabilities and children of low-income families. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) let it be known that going after Medicaid and Medicare benefits is a "wrong, misguided and lazy way to balance the budget."

Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) and Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) urged their colleagues to remain focused on protecting Medicaid and Medicare. After the press conference, nearly 150 SEIU UHW and SEIU UHE members had meetings on the hill to press the same message.

SEIU and our allies, including, the American Federation for State, City and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the National Education Association (NEA), Caring Across Generations, Families USA and Healthcare for America Now (HCAN), have fought to protect Medicaid at every turn of the fiscal debate. We'll continue to do so, knowing that millions of lives and jobs are at stake.

Comments about *Congressional Health Care Heroes Stand Up for Medicaid* are welcome. Off-topic comments and other violations of our community guidelines may be withheld or removed. Comments do not appear immediately after posting.

The Not-So-Ivory Tower: Adjunct Faculty are Forming Unions and Raising Standards in Higher Education

The World is Watching Ferguson, Mo.

Security Officer Suspended After Asthma Attack Urges Seattle Companies to Follow Law

The Fight for $15 is a Fight for Our Future

Magic Moments at NYC's People's Climate March

STRONGER TOGETHER

SEARCH SEIU.org

SEARCH